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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE



KUWAIT POST REPORT

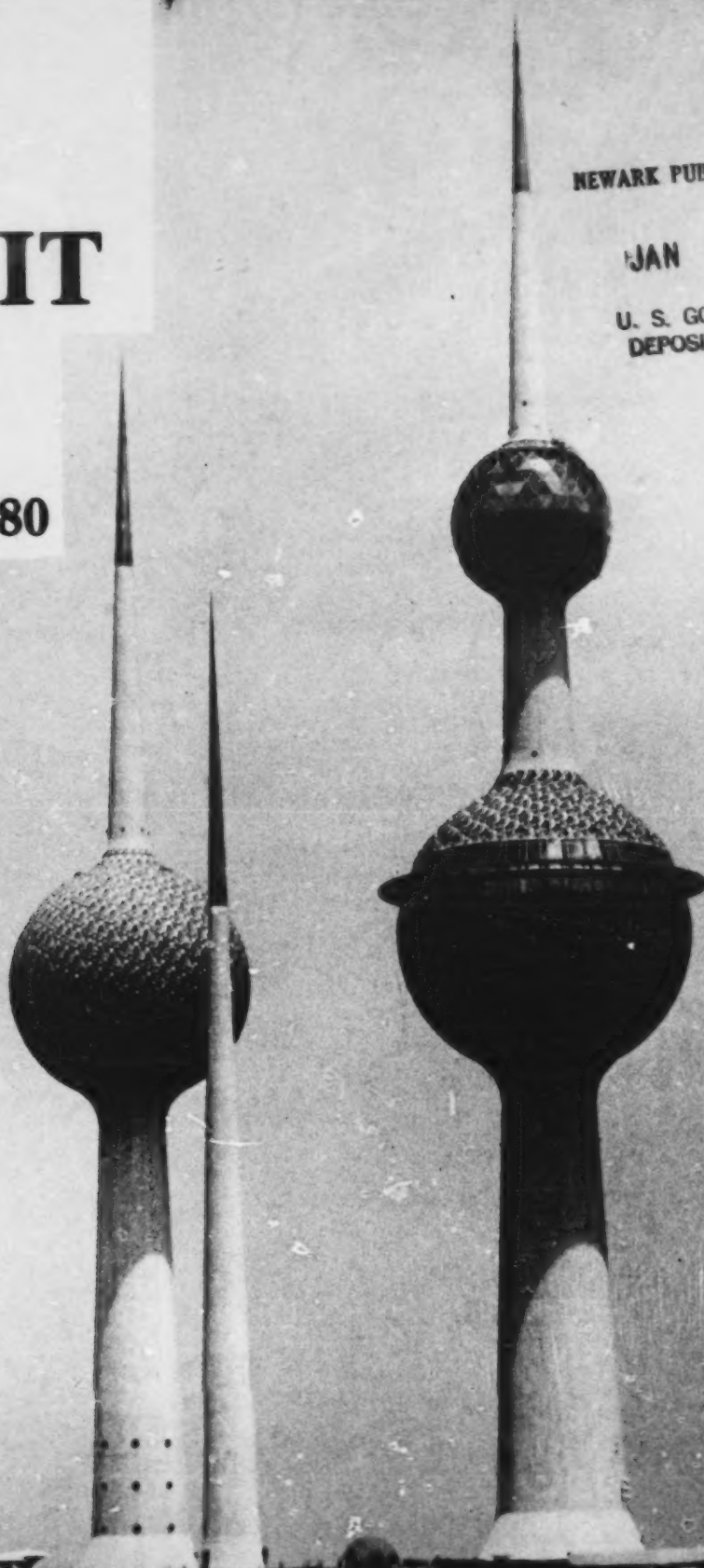
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H.E. Sheikhha Fatima mosque,
Dahya area.



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This is the official post report prepared by the post. The information contained herein is directed to official U.S. Government employees and their families. Any other information concerning the facts as set forth herein is to be regarded as unofficial information.

Cover photo: Kuwait Towers.

PREFACE

Kuwait is a post with challenges, advantages, and disadvantages. How much you enjoy and profit from your tour will depend on your own efforts to build your life around what is possible and positive and to disregard the drawbacks, which nothing can alter. Some personnel have enjoyed their tour in Kuwait; others have been less than enthusiastic. However, no one is neutral about Kuwait. Kuwait is one of the wealthiest and most progressive countries in the Middle East. This family-oriented society has concentrated on education and improving the quality of life. Hopefully, you will find a tour in Kuwait pleasant and interesting.

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The Host Country

AREA, GEOGRAPHY, AND CLIMATE

The State of Kuwait, located in the north-eastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, borders Iraq on the north and west, Saudi Arabia on the south, and the Arabian Gulf on the east. With an area of about 7,780 square miles, it is slightly smaller than New Jersey.

The country consists mainly of sandy, riverless desert, interspersed with small hills and sparse vegetation. Kuwait's climate is typical of the region. During summer (April-October) temperatures often exceed 120°F, but 110°F-115°F temperatures are more common. Most of the mean annual rainfall of 4-5 inches occurs during December and January. The short autumn and spring seasons (November, February-March) are pleasant. During winter (December and January) winter coats are often needed. In the early morning, frost sometimes appears. Sand and dust storms occur throughout the year, especially between March and August. Although some periods of very high humidity occur, during the hottest months (June, July, and August), the humidity ranges between 16% and 22%.

POPULATION

Foreign nationals comprise nearly 60% of Kuwait's 1.3 million people. The largest foreign groups are Palestinians, Lebanese, Jordanians, Syrians, Iranians, Pakistanis, Indians, Gulf Arabs, and Egyptians. The largest Western community is British, followed by Americans (just over 2,000). French, Germans, and other Europeans also reside here. Today's native Kuwaitis include recently settled Bedouin and long-established townspeople with antecedents in Central Arabia, Iraq, and Persia. This variety of origins is reflected in religion—over two-thirds of native Kuwaitis are Sunni



Pictured is Sheikh Fahed mosque.

Muslims, the remainder are Shi'ite Muslims. Only a handful are native Christians. Arabic is the official language; English is fairly widely known. The literacy rate, estimated at more than 60%, is one of the highest in the Arab world, and exceeds 80% among persons under 30. Population growth exceeds 7% per year.

Kuwait's standard of living equals that in the US. For example, most families own a car. Homes of wealthy Kuwaitis are large and, in some cases, palatial. The city offers practically no visible evidence of poverty, and those who have visited other Middle Eastern countries are often struck by the absence of beggars in the streets of Kuwait.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Kuwait, independent since 1961, has a constitutional monarchy, officially called a hereditary emirate. Executive power is centered in the Amir and in the Prime Minister, whom the Amir selects.

In August 1976, the Amir suspended the National Assembly and several articles of the constitution, pending revision with the advice of a select committee. The National Assembly will eventually be reconvened. Meanwhile, legislative power is vested in the Council of Ministers, selected by the Prime Minister. Since 1965 the crown prince has held the office of the Prime Minister.

ARTS, SCIENCE, AND EDUCATION

The diwanas (male family social gathering centers), clubs (Graduate Society, Engineering Society, Sports Clubs, etc.), private homes, and coffeehouses where politics and topics-of-the-day are discussed form the hub of Kuwait's intellectual life. These activities are paralleled by formal academic training for young people, both men and women, at Kuwait University, and in government



Seen here is a typical Kuwaiti door.

departments such as the Planning Board, where work-related topics are discussed.

Public activities in the fine arts are limited. Several unstructured associations of painters and sculptors receive government support. At least one private art gallery is open. There is a school of music, but radio and TV provide much more important outlets for Arabic music. Arabic-language plays are presented on TV and stage by small theatrical groups.

All Kuwaitis receive free education through the university level. Primary and secondary education is generally available to all nationalities at a reasonable cost, but some overcrowding and, in some cases, uncertain standards exist. Special schools are available for the physically and mentally handicapped. Education at Kuwait University is available to some qualified non-Kuwaitis. Half of the university's students are from other Gulf States. Teacher-training institutes are maintained at the post-high school level.

These educational establishments have most amenities and teaching aids; gyms, swimming pools, sports fields, and other useful equipment. Uniforms, books, and transportation are provided free to all nationals. Kuwaitis wishing to study abroad receive scholarships and allowances.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Modern Kuwait was founded about 1740 by desert nomads from Saudi Arabia, but archeological evidence suggests habitation for over 3,000 years. Because of its Gulf location, fishing, pearl diving, and trading became the most important occupations. Oil was discovered in 1938, but production was insignificant until after World War II. Since 1950 the country has developed rapidly. Today, Kuwait's prosperity depends on oil. The industry provides more than 85% of government revenue. Many other commercial and economic activities serve the petroleum industry and its Kuwaiti employees.

Existing industries include water distillation plants (the world's largest), oil refineries with desulfurizing plants, an LPG plant, an ammonia plant, a chemical fertilizer factory, a cement factory, brick- and concrete-block production, bottling plants, and various light industries.

Kuwait has the world's highest per capita imports. The local market reflects Kuwait's free trade and free enterprise outlook. Since 1965, the US has been one of the leading exporters to Kuwait, owing to Kuwait's purchases of American aircraft, industrial equipment, cars, air-conditioners, and other durable consumer goods. The US also exports substantial services to Kuwait. In 1979 the US had a favorable balance of trade close to \$1 billion. A wide range of products from Europe, neighboring countries, and the Far East is also available. Kuwaiti importers choose their goods almost entirely by price and local demand, not by national origin (except goods of Israeli origin or items manufactured by companies on the Arab boycott list, which are prohibited).

TRANSPORTATION

Automobiles

Private cars provide the only practical and dependable transportation in Kuwait. Driving is on the right. Roads in Kuwait City are good by Middle East standards; most of the principal roads are divided highways. Good all-weather highways go north to Iraq and adjoining countries and south and west to Saudi Arabia. However, the accident rate is

one of the world's highest primarily due to the inadequacies and inexperience of many drivers.

All vehicles must be imported in your name and registered and licensed with local authorities. Before registration, you must have at least third-party liability and personal insurance. Liability costs KD11.500 (about \$42) a year for a 5-passenger vehicle over 30 hp. Comprehensive, collision, and personal injury insurance costs about KD100 (about \$360) a year. The vehicle must be mechanically inspected by Kuwaiti inspectors and any deficiencies must be corrected before registration. The inspection covers primarily brakes, motor, working lights, and windows. License tags cost about \$4.25 and a drivers license about \$2.75; diplomatic personnel receive them free. Any employee or dependent over 18 with an international drivers license or a valid drivers license may get a 30-day temporary license immediately. With any state or foreign valid license you may get a local permit, which takes 1 to 6 months to obtain. Four black-and-white or color photos (1" x 1") are required for this license. If you do not have a valid drivers license, you must take a driving test—a very long, drawn-out, time-consuming procedure. The Embassy Administrative Section handles licenses, registration, etc.

Persons assigned to the Embassy, contemplating bringing US-manufactured cars to Kuwait should be aware that parts and services for US-made cars other than Chrysler and GM products are nearly impossible to obtain locally. The large, American passenger car remains the most popular in Kuwait, as roads are broad and flat and gas is very inexpensive. VWs, Toyota, Datsun, Honda, and other foreign cars enjoy a small share of the automobile market. **Special note: Vehicles over 5 years old cannot be imported.**

If you are buying a new car, buy one that is light in color and equipped with factory-installed air-conditioning before shipment. Local purchase and installation is expensive and usually unsatisfactory. Tinted glass also helps reduce glare. Four-wheel-drive cars are recommended for exploring desert trails. Check with the Embassy Administrative Section or NEA/EX before shipping any car.

Since the Embassy has a limited



Shown here is Suleimaniyah Palace.

number of vehicles—most of them required for business purposes throughout the day and night—arrange for a personal car at the earliest possible time. Some people ship their cars weeks ahead of their own arrival at post. A few personnel have purchased new or used cars locally, but prices are high. Ordering cars from major companies after arrival or delaying shipping until the last minute can cause frustrating transportation problems. Independent transportation is crucial to enjoying your tour. Ninety octane gasoline is sold at modern stations throughout Kuwait at about 21¢ a gallon (US). Ninety-eight octane costs about 35¢ a gallon (US). Gas stations are conveniently located throughout the city.

No special restrictions are placed on the use, purchase, or sale of imported vehicles. However, when a vehicle imported duty free is sold to a person without such privileges, a 4% duty, based on

the value of the car, must be paid if sold within 1 year of importation.

Local

Kuwait now has limited, reliable taxi-call service. But, taxis are usually available only at the airport, hotels, and in the center of town. Fares are high, but tipping is not necessary. Buses frequent the central district and most outlying areas, but language difficulties, cleanliness, etc., discourage use by most Westerners, including Embassy personnel. Unaccompanied women do not use taxis and/or buses.

Regional

For destinations outside Kuwait, air transportation is commonly used, and expensive jet connections can be made to almost all points. Kuwait is served by many international airlines, including

British Airways, Lufthansa, Air India, Air France, KLM, Sabena, Singapore Airlines, and all Arab and Middle East airlines. Most airlines operate only a few days a week. No American airline presently serves Kuwait, but Bahrain and Dhahran are served by Pan Am with almost daily flights from the latter to the US.

COMMUNICATIONS

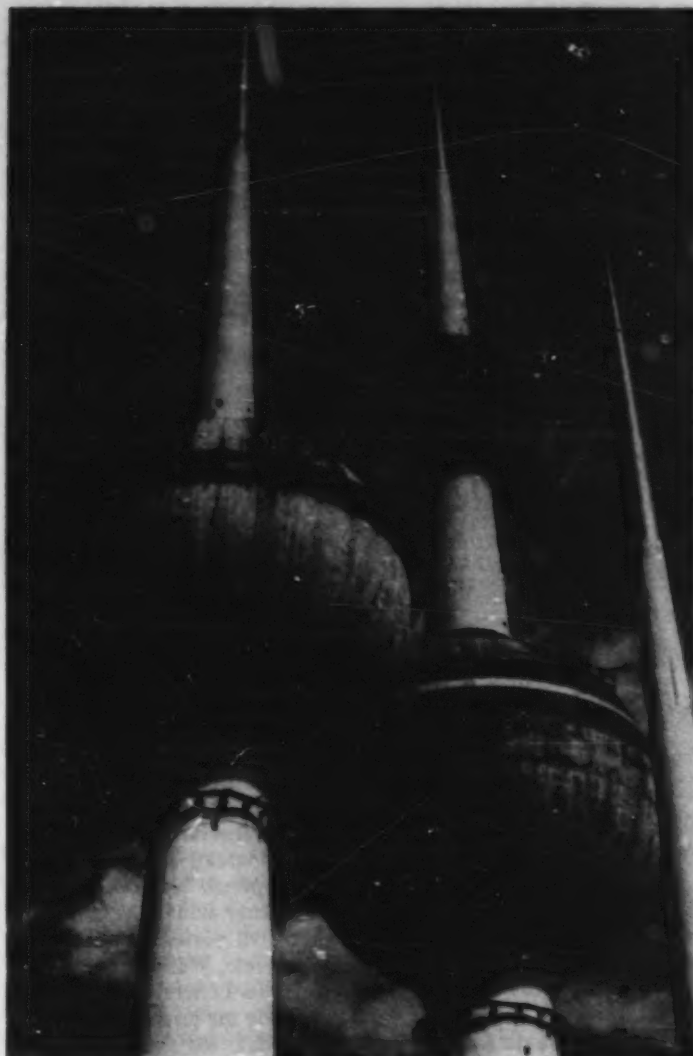
Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone service is adequate. Costs average about \$4.50 a month. Long-distance telephone service to Europe and the US via satellite is excellent. Trunk calls can also be placed to most other countries. Reception is usually good. A 3-minute call to the US costs about \$11 and \$4 for each additional minute. Telegraph service is good but relatively expensive. Many businesses and hotels, such as the Hilton Hotel across the street from the Embassy, are equipped with telex.

Mail and Pouch

Normal transit time for international airmail letters to and from New York is 7-10 days. International surface mail usually takes 7 weeks. Kuwait is authorized free air pouch for letter mail to other posts. Letter mail to the US is slow and requires US postage from the Department of State, Washington, DC, to final destination. Letters from Kuwait to Washington via air pouch usually take 8-10 days to clear the Department, and up to 20 days to reach their final destination. Personnel must supply their own stamps, so bring a large supply to post, but the Embassy Welfare Association occasionally sells them. Packages addressed to Kuwait arrive by international mail or pouch. Through international channels, however, packages from any company on the Arab boycott list will be returned. Pouch facilities offer a savings in postage for packages sent from US, but they cannot be insured. Usual transit time is about 6 weeks, but it has taken longer. Items weighing less than 2 pounds may be sent via air pouch. Kuwait has no APO facilities.

Only first-class letters can be sent by pouch from Kuwait since there is no outgoing sea pouch. Those who want to send gifts and other parcels outside Kuwait must use international mail,



Pictured are the restaurant/water towers.

which can be a long, arduous, and extremely frustrating experience. For this reason, most personnel prefer to avoid sending such parcels from Kuwait.

Address mail sent via international postal service to post as follows:

(Name)
American Embassy
P.O. Box 77 (Safat)
Kuwait City, Kuwait

Address pouch mail:

(Name)
KUWAIT
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520 (letters)

Use ZIP code 20521 for packages, newspapers, magazines, etc.

Radio and TV

Five hours of TV are broadcast daily on two local channels, including cartoons. Programs are in color. For this reason, most post personnel with children have purchased sets. Since Kuwait and the US use different line systems (Kuwait uses the European PAL broadcast standard), US TV sets are not compatible. TVs and radios, particularly Japanese and German makes, are sold at prices comparable to those in the US.

A radio with FM and medium and shortwave bands gives a fair program selection. The English service of Kuwait AM Radio operates from 8 am to 11 am and from 8 pm to 10 pm daily. The Kuwait FM stereo station, programing

mainly popular Western music, broadcasts daily from 8 am until 2 am. Short-wave bands, of course, give access to VOA, BBC, and many other stations, but reception is poor. For serious listening, bring a shortwave antenna to post.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Kuwait has two daily English-language newspapers (Arab and Third World oriented). The *International Herald Tribune* is available 1 or more days late. London newspapers are also available. *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *The Economist* are regularly available. US magazines sent via pouch take 4-6 weeks to arrive. Other English-language magazines are available, but these are often 3 or more months out-of-date when they reach the newsstand. American and British paperbacks and some children's books are available at local bookstores at 50%-100% over US prices. Censorship occasionally is enforced, especially on news magazines and textbooks. Embassy personnel can use the small library maintained by the British Council for a small fee.

HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Medical Facilities

A Health Unit/dispensary in the Embassy compound is supervised by a Foreign Service nurse, assigned to the Embassy. The State Department regional medical officer, presently stationed in Jidda, supervises the Embassy Health Unit and makes quarterly visits. Local physicians are used for emergencies and some routine care.

Several hospitals are available for emergency care, but those persons with more than routine medical and surgical problems normally are evacuated to Frankfurt. A small private hospital has been used for deliveries. However, maternity travel is authorized to Frankfurt.

Routine dentistry is available but usually does not meet US standards. Have extensive dental work completed before leaving the US. Orthodontal work is very limited and the quality of work may not meet US standards.

Reliable opticians and optometrists are available and carry a good range of frames and lenses. Special lenses must be ordered from abroad (usually the FRG) and this can take several weeks. If you wear any type of difficult-to-make lenses, bring a spare set with you.

Community Health

Colds, flu, respiratory, and sinus problems are typical complaints. Intestinal and kidney infections are the most serious ailments. From March through September it is abnormally hot and dry; during this time urinary tract stones are common due to inadequate fluid intake during periods of extreme heat. Treat fruits and vegetables before you eat them. Local meat must be well-cooked. Fly and insect control is rudimentary. Virtually all areas have rats.

Preventive Measures

Necessary immunizations are: typhoid—every 3 years; tetanus—every 10 years; gamma globulin—every 6 months; and oral polio—series and booster.

Malaria suppressant is not necessary

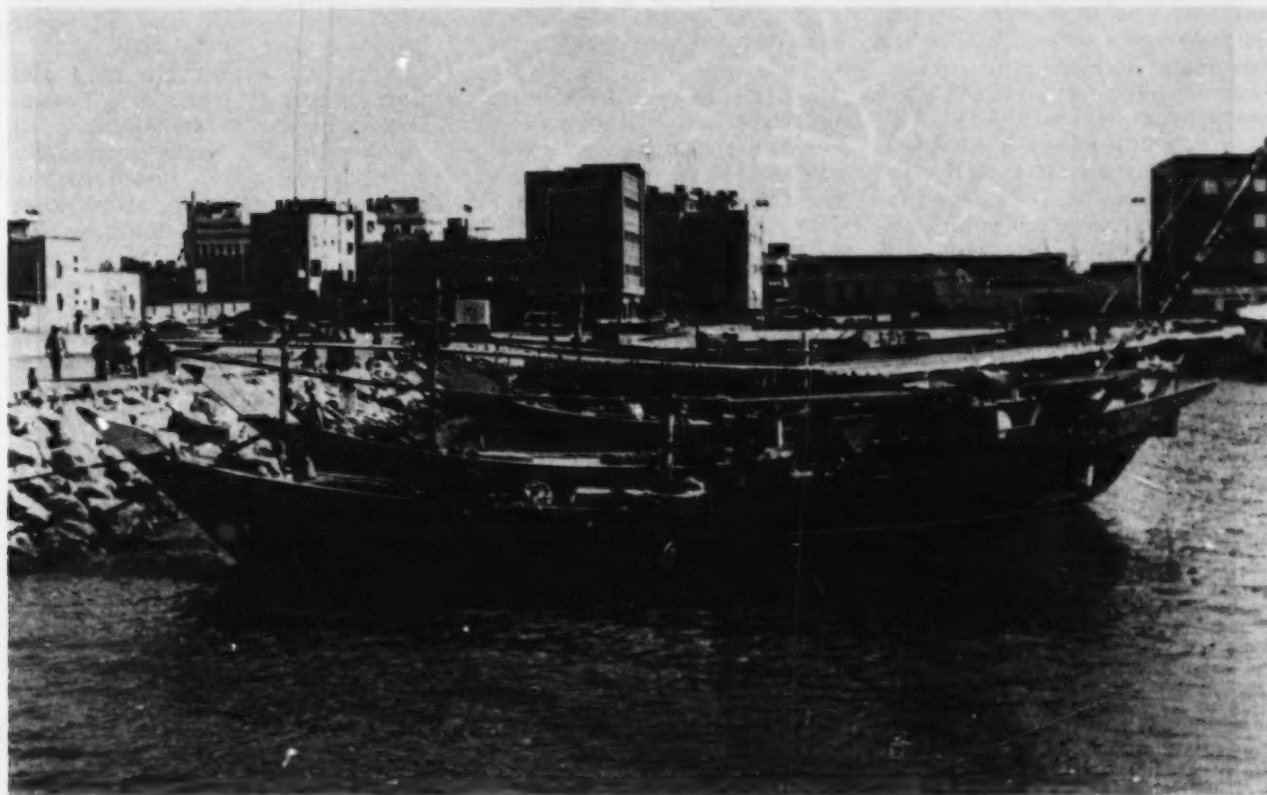
in Kuwait. Routine medicines and drugs are available in local pharmacies. However, bring at least a 6-month supply of medications and special prescriptions, and make arrangements in the US for refills. Most local adult aspirin is effervescent. If you use aspirin, include a good supply in your effects.

EMPLOYMENT FOR SPOUSES AND DEPENDENTS

At present a few employment opportunities exist for dependents at the Embassy. The Embassy's Welfare Association employs two dependents part time and two dependents normally work in temporary Embassy secretarial positions. Dependents are hired occasionally for specific, limited-duration jobs at the

Embassy. Spouses who are fully qualified school teachers may be able to teach at the American School. Applicants must present certification showing their qualifications.

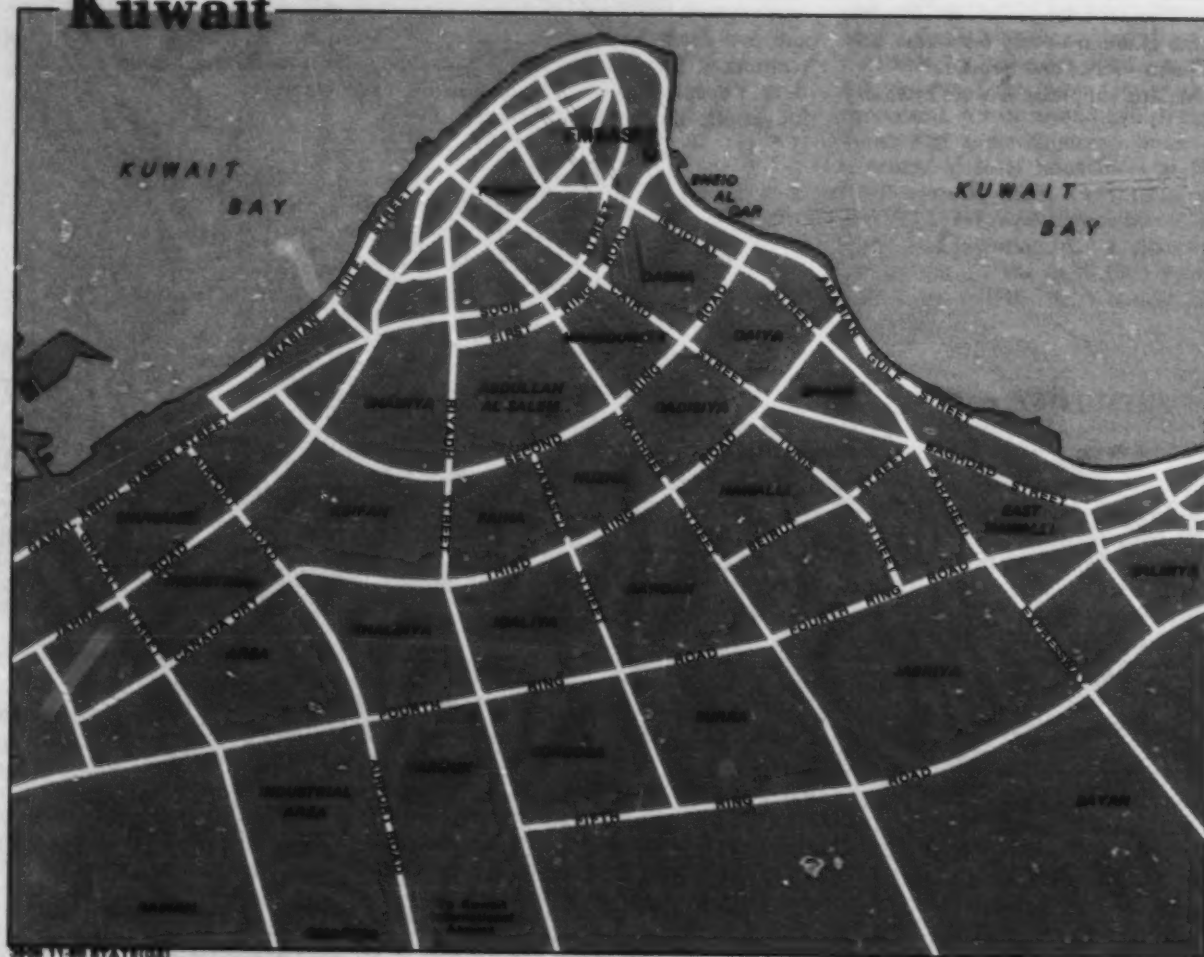
Persons with secretarial experience are in demand in the Kuwait economy and some dependents have found jobs in that field. However, many Americans do not want to work local business hours (7 am or 8 am to 1 pm, and 4 pm to 7 pm). For more specific information write the administrative officer. Most, if not all, spouses who wish to work have found employment. Qualified dependent children are routinely employed as lifeguards at the Embassy pool and there is a summer work program for others, dependent on the availability of funds and suitable work.



Fishing dhows of the past provide commerce of today.

READER
PICHE

Kuwait



Scale 1:50,000 (1:50,000)

American Embassy

KUWAIT CITY

Greater Kuwait City extends 15 miles along the Bay of Kuwait and a short way down the coast of the Arabian Gulf, and has a population of about 1 million. It is by far the most important city in the State of Kuwait and is the largest city in the Arabian Peninsula. The old city outgrew its mud walls with the advent of the country's new oil prosperity in the late 1950s. A few gates have been preserved as historical monuments. The city has expanded along the coast, and several new suburban communities have sprouted adjacent to Kuwait City.

The surrounding countryside is mainly flat, arid desert, and offers little in the way of scenery. By contrast, the city and its suburbs with broad streets, ultramodern houses and apartments, and handsome new buildings—are rather striking, though contrasts of old and new, desert and city, exist everywhere.

The Kuwait International Airport, a new ultramodern terminal, is located south of Kuwait City, about a 30-45 minute drive from the Embassy.

THE POST AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

The American Embassy, Kuwait, is located in a residential seaside area. The 5-acre Embassy compound includes the Chancery, Ambassador's residence, 2 staff apartments, a tennis court, and a swimming pool. The Embassy has a resident Ambassador, DCM, and Economic/Commercial, Political, Consular and Administrative Sections, as well as USICA and USLOK (Embassy's MAAG equivalent) offices. Total Embassy staff, including USICA, FHWA/BPR, GSA/UNDP, and USLOK, currently consists of 82 Americans and 92 local employees.

Embassy office hours are from 8 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 5 pm, Saturday through Wednesday. The Embassy is closed on Thursday and Friday. A Marine Security Guard is always on duty. At present, all Embassy offices, including USICA, are located on the compound, most of them in the Chancery itself, which also contains a "multipurpose" room where movies, meetings, and other gatherings are held. Other official US Government personnel, including those not directly assigned to the Embassy, receive required administrative support from the Embassy, but work in offices off the compound.

Travel to Kuwait is usually by air. If you are not met at the airport, take a taxi and ask for the American Embassy. If the driver does not speak English, he will at least recognize "Hilton Hotel," which is across the street from the Embassy. The Embassy telephone number is 424151 (10 lines). The usual fare from the airport to the Embassy is 3 to 3½ Kuwaiti dinars, but negotiate the fare before hiring the taxi. There is no airport bus or other transportation.

Some personnel have driven from other posts. If the political situation in the area permits such travel, only the usual formalities are required at the Kuwait border.

An Embassy representative, usually someone from your own section, will take you to a hotel if your prospective apartment or house is not ready for occupancy. Until your airfreight arrives, you can use an Embassy Welcome Kit, at a nominal charge, on a first-come basis. Kits include dishes, cutlery, cooking equipment, linens, and bedding. Complete Welcome Kits may not always be available during June, July, and August due to personnel changeovers in those months. Therefore, ship your airfreight well in advance of your arrival. An Embassy spouse or other Agency representative will be responsible for your welfare during your initial weeks in

Kuwait. He or she will take you shopping, answer questions, and assist in any way. If you move directly into your house or apartment, your refrigerator will be stocked with basics for several days.

Newly arrived personnel should try to call on the Ambassador soon after arrival.

HOUSING

Temporary Quarters

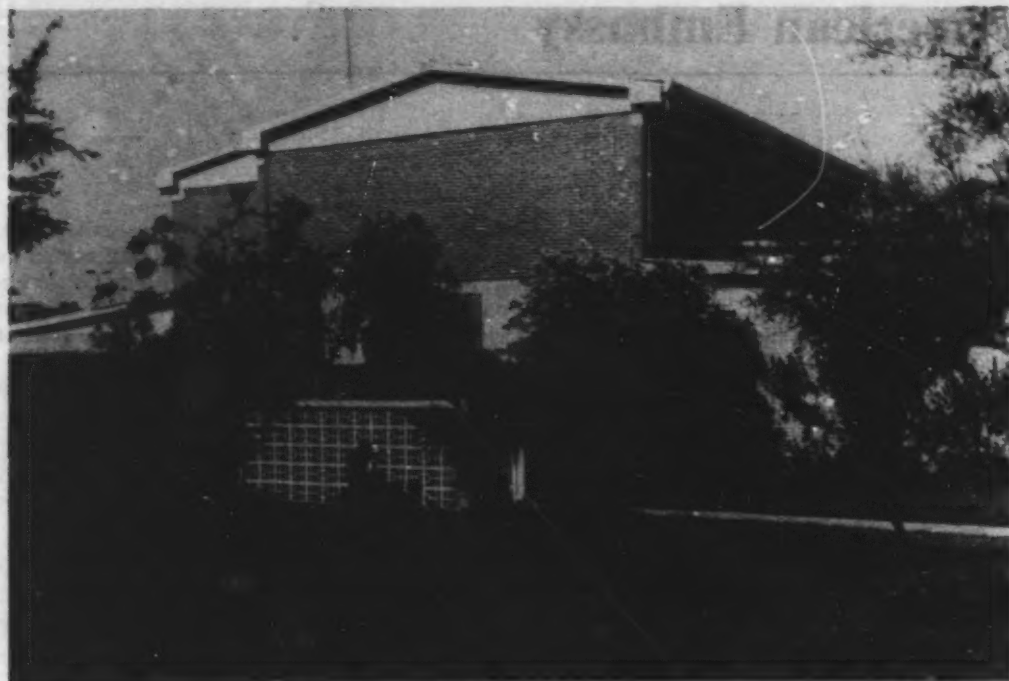
New personnel are lodged in a hotel if permanent housing is not ready. The Hilton Hotel, across the street from the Embassy, offers expensive lodging and meals. The Sheraton Hotel is comparable in quality, but it is located at the other end of town, about 10-15 minutes by car from the Embassy. Less deluxe hotel/apartment hotel accommodations within the temporary lodging allowance and walking distance of the Embassy have, of late, become increasingly popular.

Permanent Housing

By and large, housing in Kuwait is livable. Compound housing consists of the Ambassador's residence and two staff apartments. One has two bedrooms and the other has three bedrooms and a large laundry/storage room.

Three older, off-compound "villas" with large gardens are currently assigned to senior officers. Each has 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, a medium-size living/dining room combination, and several smaller rooms. Most other personnel live in townhouses or apartments. All apartments and townhouses have at least one bathroom and powder room; most have two. Personnel are assigned housing commensurate with their family size whenever possible, but few quarters have more than three bedrooms.

Front view of Ambassador's home.



Furnishings

All quarters have basic furnishings, including a stove, refrigerator, freezer, and vacuum cleaner. All quarters have automatic washers and dryers.

Bring small throw rugs if you own them. Most apartments and houses have twin- or queen-sized beds but not baby

beds and cribs. You must provide kitchenware, chinaware, silverware, glassware, table and bed linens, towels, pillows, blankets, pictures, cardtables, ashtrays, shower curtains, ironing boards, wastepaper baskets, coathangers, and other personal items. If you have children, include several small

bookcases in your shipment. You can buy most of the above items here.

Utilities and Equipment

All housing has hot-and-cold running water. Most units have central heating and air-conditioning. All other apartments are heated by small electric space heaters and are supplied with window air-conditioners.

Electric current in Kuwait is 200v-240v, 50-cycle, 3-phase, AC rather than the usual American 100v, 60 cycles. You will need stepdown transformers for American electric appliances. The Embassy supplies two transformers per residence, but if your requirements exceed this number, bring transformers with you. They can be purchased locally at higher than US prices. Irons, hand-mixers, blenders, and other small appliances can be purchased locally. Selection and availability of a particular model and make depend on current market. Note, however, that Kuwait has frequent power surges ranging up to 290v. During these surges appliances frequently are damaged. The Embassy recommends that auto transformers be brought for expensive stereo equipment. Plugs and outlets are 3-pronged square British-type.



Backyard view of Ambassador's residence.

FOOD

Subject to seasonal variations and occasional shortages, most foods are readily available in Kuwait. The post cost-of-living allowance helps offset high costs. Good fresh fish and fruits are available locally. Fresh vegetables, although available, often are inferior by American standards. Canned and frozen vegetables from America, Europe, and Australia are sold. Frozen meat and poultry generally are imported from Denmark, New Zealand, Australia, or the US. Very little fresh meat and poultry is available. Local eggs, smaller than those in the US, are available. Eggs flown in from Lebanon often have a strong taste of preservative. The local dairy produces good quality milk, ice cream, yogurt, cream, and sour cream from Danish powdered milk. Soft drinks (Pepsi-Cola, Canada Dry, Seven-Up, Orange-Crush, etc.) are available. Coca-Cola is not.

Kuwait has many small groceries and a few small American-type supermarkets, as well as larger shopping center complexes, called cooperatives, in each suburb. The Embassy does not have a commissary or cooperative-buying system.

Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in Kuwait except for diplomatic missions. The Embassy's small liquor store stocks a limited selection of beer, liquor, liqueurs, and wine. A ration system in effect meets normal requirements.

CLOTHING

Although summers are long and hot in Kuwait, winters are chilly and occasionally rainy. Clothing worn in Washington, DC, (without snowsuits and snowboots) is suitable. Summer clothing is worn exclusively for about 7 months of the year. Synthetics can be suffocating during hot, humid periods. Several bathing suits are recommended since local bathing gear is expensive, low quality, and limited in selection.

From November to March, fall, winter, and spring clothing is worn, including topcoats and rainwear.

Men. Light-weight summer suits for office and evening wear, and slacks and sports shirts for occasional wear will meet summer dress requirements. Ac-



Shown are the vegetable and fruit stands (above) and (below) general merchandise stands of the local market (suq).



ceptable drycleaners can be found, but many prefer to rely on wash-and-wear suits since most local drycleaning is just fair. Except for the Ambassador, no one assigned to Kuwait need have a dinner jacket. Tails and morning dress are not worn in Kuwait. Medium- to light-weight American fall, spring, and winter suits are suitable for the cooler months. English and continental men's shoes, underwear, shirts, neckties, socks, and ready-made suits are available, but they

are expensive and the selection of sizes, styles, and quality varies. Most men prefer to bring a 2-year supply.

Women. A selection of summer cotton dresses, slacks, skirts and blouses, and pantsuits for all occasions is recommended. Shorts are not worn publicly but are worn at poolside or on private beaches. Skirts and blouses, dresses, and pantsuits are worn to the office. Women

will also need a medium-to-large selection of long skirts and blouses for after-five wear. Include a long dinner dress with sleeves or a jacket for some Kuwaiti functions. In winter, pantsuits, slacks, dresses, and skirts and blouses are worn. Coats are also needed. Women's clothing stores sell a small selection of European-made dresses, skirts, and suits at high prices.

Medium-priced items, for all practical purposes, do not exist. Lingerie (some American-made) is available, generally at reasonable prices, but selection is limited. Most women prefer to wear cotton or cotton blends. Stockings are available at reasonable prices, but often they have decayed. Hats and gloves are almost never worn. European shoes are available and expensive, but most Americans cannot find those that fit. Most women bring all the shoes they will need with them, supplementing with mail orders and locally purchased sandals. Dress or everyday sandals do not last long—bring plenty.

Children. Clothing for children and babies is available, but prices are high and selection is slim. Winter coats, jackets, or Windbreakers are needed. Required school uniforms, which can be made locally (varying quality), or purchased in the US, consist of navy blue slacks for boys and navy blue A-line sleeveless jumpers (grades 1-6) or navy blue A-line skirts (grades 7-12) for girls. Light blue or white shirts with collars are worn. All shirts (boys and girls) must button down the front and have short or long sleeves. No slipovers, sleeveless, or jerseys can be worn. Boys' school trousers must be dress pants. No jeans or corduroys are permitted. Navy cardigan sweaters are accepted for in-class wear during the cooler months. For outdoors, a light-weight, flannel-lined Windbreaker for fall and spring and a heavier jacket/coat of your choice for winter is usually sufficient. Gym uniforms are white shorts and T-shirts for boys and navy shorts and white blouses for girls. Children's shoes are available, but selection and quality are poor. Narrow sizes are almost impossible to find.

Fabrics are available at a reasonable cost and a limited variety of patterns and notions is available. Local dressmakers and/or tailors have been used with varying degrees of success. Good tailors are expensive. Sturdy, American tennis shoes are extremely difficult, if

not impossible, to find and unavailable in women's sizes.

SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

Supplies

It is said that everything is available in Kuwait, if you look long and hard enough. But, the supply is often limited and particular items may be out-of-stock at any given time. Despite minimal import duties, prices are high, as overhead and profit margins are large and transportation costs great.

Adequate stocks of toiletries, cosmetics, shaving supplies, medicines, and household entertainment needs are available. Since feminine personal items are often unavailable, bring them to post. Most common brands of American and British cigarettes and some American brands of cigars and pipe tobacco, as well as smoking accessories, also are available at prices comparable to, or lower than, US prices. "Best buys" are considered to be audio, photo, and optical equipment, as well as watches, tape recorders, and similar products of Japanese, Swiss, or other foreign origin.

Good fabrics are available, but you must be careful since fabrics frequently are unmarked "seconds." Ready-made table linens are difficult to locate at reasonable prices. Linen and damask fabrics are available locally. Most sheets and towels are "seconds" from the US. Prices are usually 30% or more over US retail prices for a quality product.

Bring an initial supply of hobbies, books, and similar items for children. A small supply of gifts for birthday parties is useful. Several local bookstores are patronized. However, prices are 50%-100% higher than those in the US and the selection may not be good.

The following items are either unobtainable, expensive, or difficult to find in Kuwait: Christmas and other giftwrapping paper, ribbon, tags, seasonal paper decorations, and good artificial Christmas trees (natural Christmas trees are sold in Kuwait, but are very expensive). Bring Christmas decorations and lights, shelfpaper, greeting cards, ironing boards and covers, rubber spatulas, plastic cups, brooms, sponge mops and refills, dust mops with extra heads, whisk-brooms, spices and flavorings (only artificial flavorings are sold), heavy-duty

aluminum foil, bathmats, pecans, canned pumpkin, steam iron cleaner, pet supplies and toys, disposable baby bottles and liners, super- and junior-size sanitary napkins and tampons, makeup for medium-to-light complexions, flower and vegetable seeds, plastic flowerpots, plant food, picture hooks, writing paper, informals, American-type baby beds, cribs, playpens, high chairs, cardtables, shower curtains, hair coloring (for other than black or dark brown hair), home permanents, and socks or stockings for all family members.

No engraving of calling cards, invitations, etc., is done in Kuwait. Satisfactory printing is available at a cost much higher than that in the US.

Basic Services

Local dressmakers and tailors for men and women are available but often are not highly skilled. Shoe repair and dry-cleaning are available but are usually substandard.

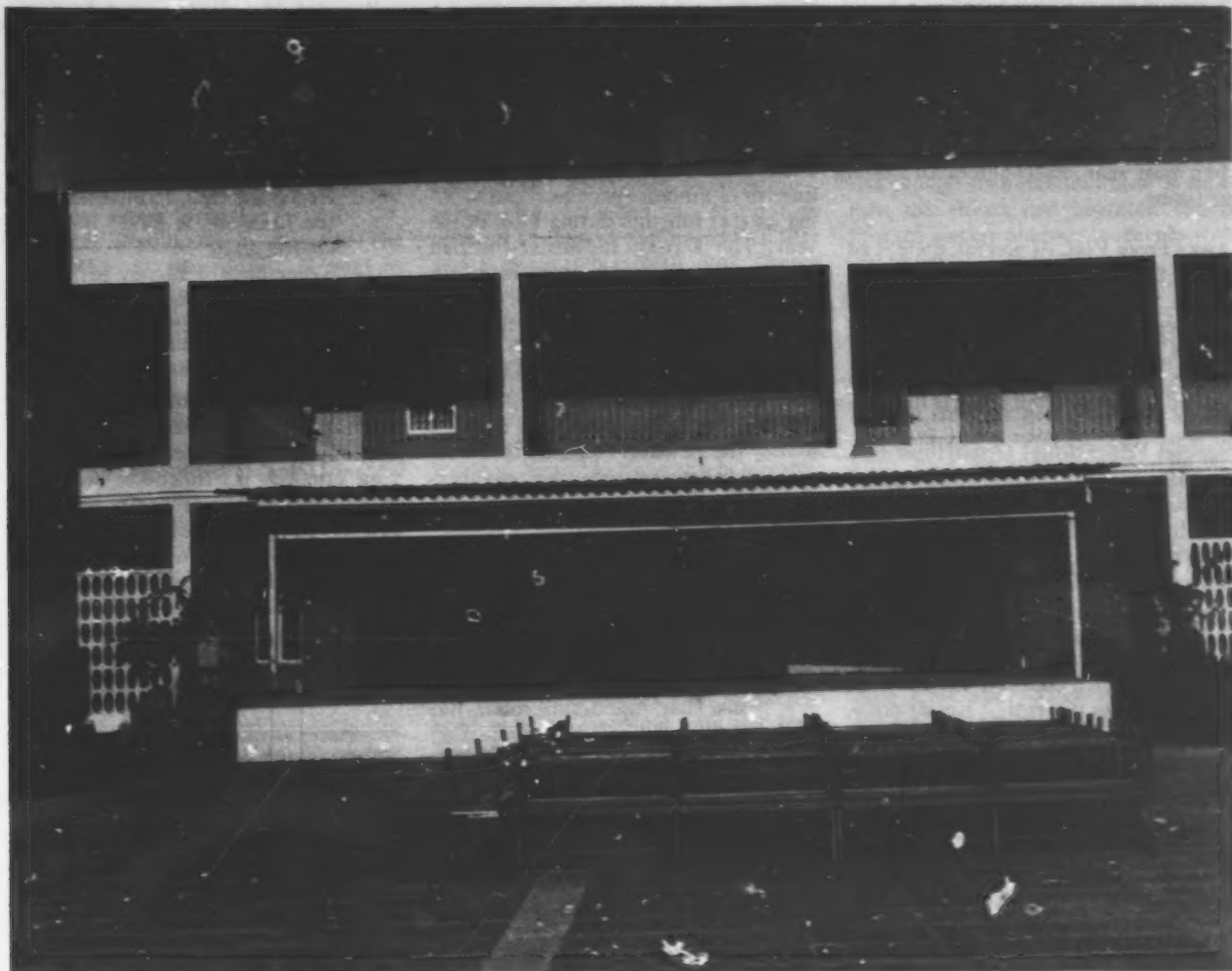
The local women's beauty shops give satisfactory shampoo-and-sets for \$6 to \$10. Haircuts cost from \$5. Men's haircuts cost from \$7 to \$10.

GM and Chrysler cars can be serviced satisfactorily at modern garages, but prices are high. Other makes are serviced in local garages with varying degrees of skill and often the workmanship is substandard. Makes not sold in Kuwait are impossible to maintain due to lack of parts and service facilities.

Domestic Help

The number of servants Embassy members employ depends on entertaining required, family size, and income. Some employees hire no help. Some, particularly singles, hire part-time help, and perhaps share a servant with one or two other employees. Families with small children often hire maids to babysit evenings as well as help with cleaning and laundry. Families with older children or couples with no children often hire a male servant for bartending and table-waiting. Servants wages are not low in Kuwait. Servants make \$220 a month and up. What is possible really depends on individual income, priorities, and needs. Part-time help for parties is available.

Government-provided housing in Kuwait now includes automatic washers, dryers, and vacuum cleaners which influence the amount of help required. But, remember that household



Shown is the American School of Kuwait (ASK).

chores are not as efficiently managed as in Washington, DC. Women who do it all will have little free time. A daily battle with sand and dust is required, and marketing consumes an inordinate amount of time. There is no large pool of teenage or adult daytime or evening babysitters.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Both Roman Catholic and Protestant church services are conducted in Kuwait City and in the oil town of Ahmadi, 45 minutes south. In Kuwait City, interdenominational Protestant services are held at the National Evangelical Church (the old American Mission compound) on Sunday evenings. The Roman Catholic Church, with daily services, is located near the Sheraton Hotel. A Church of

England congregation in Ahmadi has a minister who holds house communion services in Kuwait City monthly on a Friday.

EDUCATION

Dependent Education

At Post. Most Embassy children attend the American School of Kuwait (ASK), established in September 1964, as a joint Embassy and American business firms effort. Enrollment is now about 990. The student body represents 33 nationalities.

The school provides instruction for kindergarten and grades 1 through 12. The curriculum is that of US general, academic, college preparatory, public

schools. The school testing program includes the College Entrance Examination Board tests. Instruction is in English; Arabic and French are taught as foreign languages. The school does not offer separate classes for native and nonnative speakers of English, which is a handicap. Religious instruction is offered for Muslim students. Most graduates go on to colleges and universities in the US or other countries. The school is housed in a centrally air-conditioned building located on grounds of about 1 to 1-1/2 acres. It has a library of 15,000 volumes, 3 laboratories, a playground, an audiovisual room, and 40 classrooms. An assembly hall is planned for the near future. Independent, commercial bus transportation is used by US Government dependents. The school year, divided into two 18-week semesters, begins

in September and ends in June. The post educational allowance covers tuition costs and most transportation costs.

Currently, ASK tuition varies from KD690 (\$2,518) to KD785 (\$2,865) for grades 1-12. All post-kindergarten children must wear locally purchased school uniforms.

Away From Post. At present, there is an "away from post" school allowance for grades 9 to 12. The nearest accessible and desirable schools away from post are in Rome. A DOD school with grades 1-12 and boarding facilities is located in Bahrain, but space is limited.

Special Educational Opportunities

For all practical purposes, no special facilities exist for advanced or for emotionally, physically, or mentally handicapped American children. Tutors for catchup work are almost impossible to find. Kuwait offers limited special educational opportunities. Courses at Kuwait University are taught primarily in Arabic, which creates a difficulty for most American students. A similar problem exists in local commercial schools where instruction is usually in Arabic. The Voltaire Institute, attached to the French Embassy, offers instruction in French. Spouses of Americans and other expatriate personnel living in Kuwait occasionally offer piano, singing, and some instrumental music tutoring. The Gazelle Club offers riding instruction.

Post Orientation Program

Newcomers receive Welcome Kits with information concerning Kuwait and notices on post administration. Orientation is conducted mainly by the regional security officer in group sessions and informally by the administrative officer.

Arabic-language lessons are provided at the Embassy for personnel and dependents, as funds permit.

RECREATION AND SOCIAL LIFE

Sports

Soccer and basketball are the only major sports in which Kuwaitis participate regularly. However, competition in these sports is generally between Ku-

waiti teams, or between Kuwaiti and other national teams, and is not open to US employees and families.

US personnel enjoy swimming, tennis, squash, golf, water skiing, and sailing. Many people play tennis even in midsummer. Bowling attracts a large number of Embassy personnel and bowling leagues function during most of the year. The Kuwait Industrial Softball League currently fields seven teams, in addition to the traditionally formidable Embassy team, and is in full swing from September through May.

The Embassy offers a swimming pool and tennis court to the sports enthusiast. For other sports, you must go outside the Embassy community.

The following clubs offer membership to Americans:

- The Gazelle Club, a private, general recreation facility about 40 minutes from the Embassy. Club members have access to a private beach, swimming pool, water skiing, horseback riding, tennis, a snackbar, and dining room. Initial annual fee is KD300 (\$1,102) and subsequent renewal is KD200 (\$735) a year. Most activities except swimming involve hourly fees. Membership is only open to families and the waiting list is long.
- The Sea Club, about a 20-minute drive from the Embassy, features a good private beach, a boat launch area, and a swimming pool. Monthly memberships are available at KD30 (\$110), so you don't have to be on the long waiting list.
- Golf clubs. A number of desert courses justify bringing your golf equipment. Major courses used by Embassy personnel are operated by the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) in Ahmadi; the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) in Mina Abdulla—about a 50-minute drive from the Embassy; and by a private Japanese group. Memberships are limited and can be obtained only through special invitation, but in most cases this can be arranged. The KOC Golf Club features oiled fairways and raked sand "greens" (known locally as

"browns"). Numerous tournaments are held throughout the year.

- Qadisiyya Club. An Arab sporting club open to general membership. Facilities include squash courts and tennis courts. Annual fee for the club, 15 minutes from the Embassy, is KD15 for each sport.
- Skeet club. Embassy personnel can join the active skeet club at the Kuwait Oil Company at a nominal fee.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Touring by car outside Kuwait has not been common in recent years because of area conditions. In cooler weather, many people enjoy driving to the local desert in search of hardier forms of wildlife and to see Bedouin tribes with their black-and-brown tents and camel herds. People frequently drive to nearby beaches. An escarpment north of Kuwait City along the coast is a favorite picnic and rock climbing area.

Places of interest in Kuwait include:

- Kuwait Museum: This museum contains round stamp seals and pottery from Failaka Island contemporaneous with the Barbar civilization of Bahrain, which dates back to 3,500 BC. The museum also contains models of Kuwait dhows and other items of more recent Kuwait history.
- Failaka Island: The Island of Failaka, 30 kilometers offshore from Kuwait City, was occupied during several major historical periods. Archeological excavations of palaces, as well as a Greek temple and fortifications, can be explored. Portuguese fortifications and historic Islamic cities are also at various spots on the island.
- Gates of the City Wall: Three gates and a section of the mud wall remain as a reminder of the Wahhabi and Saudi invasion of Kuwait 60 years ago. The wall, constructed in 1920, remained standing until 1957.
- Shipbuilding at Al-Doha: About 30 minutes from Kuwait City is a group of private shipbuilding establishments on the edge of Kuwait Bay. Here wooden dhows are still constructed with simple tools by skilled craftsmen.

- **Al-Jahra Oasis:** Al-Jahra lies about 13 kilometers west of Kuwait City and was the scene of the famous 1920 battle between Kuwait and Bedouin forces. On Fridays a large, active camel market is held in the center of town. Nearby is the Red Palace, an old village fortress.
- **Oil Distillation in Ahmadi:** The Ahmadi governorate is next to the governorate of Kuwait in importance. It contains most of Kuwait's oil installations and seaports. The Kuwait Oil Company's impressive display center instructively depicts the local oil industry.
- **The Agricultural Experimental Station:** This experimental farm, operated by the Ministry of Public Works, is near Kheitan, on the road to the airport. Included is an agricultural experimental section, a poultry and animal husbandry section, a plant protection section, and a dairy research and production section.
- **Shu'aiba:** An important industrial area about 44 kilometers south of Kuwait City, it contains an oil refinery, a chemical fertilizer plant, and other industrial establishments.

Indoor gardening is a satisfying outlet for apartment dwellers. Most have found that anything that will grow and flourish in the ground can be coaxed to thrive indoors as well. Potting soil is very expensive. Prudent care and programming can assure continuous enjoyment of some kind of flowering plant year round. Limits of indoor gardening are dictated only by the light available within a given area and the individual's imagination and perseverance. Excellent investments for the prospective outdoor and indoor gardener are the *Sunset Books of Desert Gardening, Gardening in Containers, and House Plants*.

Those interested in natural history and archeology are welcome to join the Ahmadi Natural History Society. Sponsored by the Kuwait Oil Company, the Society meets regularly throughout the year in Ahmadi, and its members participate in fieldtrips in quest of plants, flints, bird sightings, etc. Annual subscription is currently 500 fils per member or KDI per family.

Although the above are interesting and diverting, they provide no relief from Kuwait's climate. Therefore, Kuwait has been designated an R&R post. This means that most personnel will have their way paid to and from Athens once in a 2-year tour. The Athens fare can be applied to travel anywhere else, provided the destination offers a change of culture and climate and is not another R&R post. Greece has been a consistently favored vacation spot for Embassy personnel, but many apply their R&R fare to trips elsewhere in the Mediterranean and Europe.

Local travel agents arrange periodic flights to Lebanon, Egypt, Cyprus, and other points of interest in the Arab world at favorable plane and hotel rates. Single staff have taken advantage of these tours during the holidays following Ramadan and the Haj. Travel in the Gulf is of interest to many, but plane fares are discouragingly high. Hotel rates (and lack of hotel space) are prohibitive if you travel on your own. In the past, during politically quiet times, the more adventurous have organized road trips to Iraq and Iran via Iraq. Visas for US official and diplomatic passports are not currently being issued by Iraqi authorities. Baghdad is about 12 hours driving time from Kuwait; Basra, gateway to the marshes, is only 3. At the time of this writing, these trips are not feasible.

Entertainment

Kuwait has few cultural activities, but some musical and artistic groups perform from time to time. Public lectures in English are provided occasionally by guest lecturers at Kuwait University. However, most cultural activities are do-it-yourself. You can join an established British theater group that presents plays between October and May. The American Community Theater (ACT) also sponsors plays and musicals using mainly the talents of Embassy and American School personnel but drawing on the entire English-speaking community as well. Although Kuwait has no orchestra, adults and children can join choirs, and musically talented people occasionally give performances. Some serious music lovers bring or buy high-fidelity tape and recording equipment here to enjoy their favorite music. Bring your own records to post; local supplies are limited and expensive. Piano tuners are available.

A number of public movie houses in Kuwait present mostly out-of-date English-language films. Bridge is a popular pastime. The Hilton and Sheraton Hotels have restaurants that offer average meals at high prices and live band music. Several other local restaurants also provide such entertainment. In summer, the Hilton and Sheraton Hotels sponsor weekly outdoor barbecues with live music.

Many Embassy members pursue personal hobbies, such as quilting, candle-making, painting, needlepoint, macrame, and piano. In sum, if you depend on "canned" entertainment you may find Kuwait frustrating. If you have a creative bent and a willingness to draw on your own resources, opportunities abound to pursue your interests and develop new skills.

Kuwait is modern, progressive, and, in many ways, a Western-appearing country, but the religious heritage of Islam has given Arabs a different culture and a strict code of ethics. Although customs differ widely from those in the West, common sense and politeness for another culture will enable a visitor to enjoy Kuwait.

Hospitality is the basic rule of desert life and this custom has continued. Avoid overly admiring or praising your host's personal items, or the host may feel compelled by the dictates of culture to make a gift of the object you admire. You should not refuse an offer of food or drink unless it is necessary. Shopkeepers sometimes offer tea or coffee to shoppers while they browse.

Do not inquire or seem curious about women in an Arab family. Women are very sensitive subjects to Arabs, and their perception of women differs greatly from those in the US. Western women should dress modestly and be discreet whenever they go outside their homes.

Alcohol is strictly prohibited in Kuwait except to the diplomatic corps. During the Holy Month of Ramadan, Muslims fast from all food and drink from sunrise to sunset. During the day, non-Muslims cannot eat, drink, or smoke in public.

In general, foreigners should not take photographs in Kuwait City. Some Arabs, especially women, object to being photographed. Local police often will warn against taking pictures in the suq (market) and may confiscate film if

pictures are taken. Muslims do not wish to have their mosques regarded as curiosities or the subject of tourist snapshots. On the other hand, there is no objection to photographs at private parties or outings, where only friends are present.

Social Activities

Among Americans. The Embassy swimming pool and tennis court are the sports and social centers for many Embassy personnel and their families during the spring-summer-fall seasons of the year. The Embassy's indoor multipurpose room (small auditorium) provides a year-round location for movies, plays, exhibits, and similar activities.

The Embassy Recreation Association, formed in 1972, offers membership to all US Government employees in Kuwait. The association sponsors happy hours and seasonal parties. The Embassy Welfare Association operates a beverage store, snackbar at poolside, and a rental car, and provides a projectionist for movies. Movies are shown in the Embassy multipurpose room all year. The Welfare Association requires a deposit of \$200-\$300 for families and \$100-\$200 for singles, depending on salary level.

The American Women's League is an association open to women (US citizens and those married to US citizens). It is largely social in nature, since the Kuwaiti Government considers charity fundraising unnecessary. The League holds monthly meetings throughout the fall, winter, and spring, and features programs of general interest. It also sponsors three children's parties—Halloween, Christmas, and Easter. It usually organizes an international card party in the spring and sponsors dances, barbecues, and outings. Membership dues are nominal.

The Embassy compound, although modest in size, serves as a playground for the young. Parents should include a

good supply of children's hobby equipment in their shipments. Kuwait is an excellent place to begin or continue tennis instruction. Prices compare with US fees. Bowling at the Hilton Hotel and Silver Towers bowling alleys is popular with the over-10 group. Bike riding is limited because paved areas on the compound are minimal, and traffic is hazardous on public roads. A new ice skating rink recently opened. Although Kuwait has no Boy Scout or Girl Scout organizations, a scouting activity is being attempted within the US community. Embassy parents sometimes organize campouts and desert trips. Since the birthday party circuit is heavy, suitable gifts are a good investment.

Younger children have few adjustment problems in Kuwait, even though the range of activities for them is limited. Teenagers find life more confining. The school provides very limited, noncoed social and extracurricular outlets. Weekend social life is limited to movies or seasonal swimming. Large teenage parties are rare. TV programs include only a few hours of English-language shows. Thirty minutes of cartoons are the high point of the sunset hour for the younger set. "Sesame Street" in Arabic appears daily. The swimming season, however, extends from beginning of April through October, and the compound swimming pool is a social and recreational center for dependents of all ages during the summer months.

International Contacts. Social life is an integral part of a Kuwait tour. In a small community where public entertainment is limited, the social pace can become frantic. Those whose jobs do not involve them in official functions still find their calendars full, as entertaining at cocktails or dinner is everyone's sport.

Most entertaining is informal. Buffets are the preferred form of dinner service, particularly by Kuwaitis. Sit-down dinners are a hazard unless you know your guests very well; Arabs are casual about accepting invitations or

sending regrets. The formally set table frequently may have several empty places—or may be squeezed to add two more—by the time dinner is served. Cocktail buffets are preferred for handling large groups.

Kuwait's traditionally conservative society is becoming more open, and opportunities exist to form excellent professional and personal relationships among Kuwaitis, although this requires effort. In addition, both Arab and other expatriate communities are active socially, and Embassy personnel often find friends among them. The diplomatic community is large and interesting.

OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS

Nature of Functions

Most formal functions given by Kuwaiti Government officials are either receptions or buffet dinners. Dark suits for men are the usual dress. Most entertaining, however, is informal and takes place in the evening, usually at official or private residences. Dress on these occasions is a suit and tie for men and long dresses for women.

Standards of Social Conduct

Normally, attendance at official Kuwaiti functions is limited to the Ambassador and DCM. Other Embassy personnel attend other types of functions. The standards of conduct are similar to any other social gathering, with the caution that Kuwaitis are less talkative and more conservative.

Social calling is limited in Kuwait. Incoming personnel may find it useful to call on their diplomatic counterparts and on individuals with whom they will do business. Normally, the spouses of diplomats below the ambassadorial or charge level do not call on each other.

Calling cards are rarely used. Officer personnel will find a business card essential. A modest supply of personal or "Mr. and Mrs." cards is helpful but not necessary. These can be printed, not engraved, by local firms.

Notes For Travelers

GETTING TO THE POST

Travel to Kuwait is usually by air. There are direct, nonstop jet flights to Kuwait on certain days of the week from London, Rome, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Athens, Beirut, New Delhi, and Bombay. This is the safest and surest way of travel. On the other hand, some personnel have arranged to pick up their cars in other countries and drive overland to Kuwait. This is possible if you have an international drivers license, carnet du passage, and visas valid for travel in the countries entered. Political problems in the area, gasoline shortages (in Turkey) or health problems (e.g. cholera), may make such travel difficult or impossible at any particular time. If you plan to come by car, inform the post well in advance, giving the proposed route, arrival time, and full information concerning your car, plans, etc.

Average shipping time from the US to Kuwait is 3 months by cargo ship and from 1-4 weeks for airfreight. Unloading and processing requires at least 2 weeks. Sometimes 1 month or more elapses after effects are delivered to the US Despatch Agent in New York before a ship for Kuwait is available for loading. Therefore, we cannot overemphasize the importance of early shipment. Shipments from Europe arrive in half the time.

Markings for airfreight, household effects, and cars should read as follows:

**AMERICAN EMBASSY
KUWAIT, STATE OF KUWAIT
(FOR: EMPLOYEE'S NAME)**

Although the Embassy has some Welcome Kits for temporary use, airfreight shipments should include linens, kitchenware, and other items needed during the period before your surface shipment arrives. Note that airfreight, too, may take up to 15 days to arrive and 2-4 weeks to clear customs. Cars need not be boxed, unless the shipment originates from a post with mandatory crating. No limitation is placed on the size of liftvans that can be handled in Kuwait.

Although pilferage and breakage in

shipments have been minimal in the past, marine insurance is advisable.

Except for residence-to-residence or through container-type shipments, all shipments should be sent to the individual in care of the American Embassy, Kuwait.

CUSTOMS, DUTIES, AND PASSAGE

Customs and Duties

All diplomatic personnel have free-entry privileges during their entire tour of duty. Nondiplomatic personnel are accorded free entry of household effects within their first 6 months of arrival at post.

Alcoholic beverages and goods of Israeli origin cannot be imported or exported in baggage or household effects by Embassy members. Although diplomatic missions are exempt, Kuwait has legal prohibition. Alcohol cannot be imported or exported individually by assigned personnel.

Remember to check with the Embassy prior to shipping a car. Cars over 5 years old may not be imported.

The Kuwait customs charge is 4% ad valorem on almost all items. The Embassy arranges duty-free entry of airfreight, household effects, and private vehicles.

No restrictions are placed on importing and exporting currency, travelers checks, or other dollar instruments.

Passage

All personnel arriving in Kuwait should have Kuwaiti visas. It is most important that personnel and their dependents not have an Israeli stamp of any kind in their passports. If such a stamp is found, the passport holder may be deported at once. Those arriving should also hold valid health cards. A cholera certificate is required only for transit travelers going to Saudi Arabia. The last inoculation must have been within 6 months of date of entry.

Pets

Pets may be brought to post, but obtain veterinarian's certificates of good health and rabies vaccination before the animal is sent and have them with you when your pet arrives. No restrictions on the entry of pets into Kuwait and no quarantine exist. On the other hand, the climate is severe. Local inhabitants often mistreat pets, so owners must keep them from roaming. If you plan to bring a pet, please inform the post in advance. Veterinary service is substandard but available. Rabies, distemper, and hepatitis shots can be obtained at the veterinary clinic. Since pet supplies and toys are limited, bring them with you. A pet must have a valid government "ID" card for presentation when the owner wishes to take the pet out of Kuwait. Veterinarians provide such documents.

FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION

The Embassy discourages importing firearms and ammunition. There is no real hunting in Kuwait. If you are going to bring these items, notify the Administrative Section in advance.

CURRENCY, BANKING, AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

The unit of currency is the Kuwaiti dinar (KD), which is issued in notes of KD10, KD5, KD1, KD½, and KD¼. The KD is divided into 1,000 fils and currently is equivalent to about US \$3.65.

Although foreign banks are not permitted in Kuwait, several local banks provide banking services for Embassy employees. The Embassy has an agreement with the Financial Group of Kuwait, whereby an Embassy driver takes personal dollar checks to the main office at 9 am daily for conversion into KD. Various banks also provide checking account facilities and sell travelers checks. Cabled drafts or money orders can be sent to Embassy personnel through the Financial Group of Kuwait. Banks will handle transfer of funds from

Kuwait to the US or elsewhere. Travelers checks can be cashed easily.

Kuwait uses the metric system of weights and measures. Gasoline is sold by the liter; temperature is cited in degrees centigrade; and distances are measured in kilometers.

TAXES, EXCHANGE, AND SALE OF PROPERTY

Restrictions

Virtually no taxes or excise duties affect Embassy personnel in Kuwait.

There are charges for mandatory automobile insurance (third-party liability and personal), and nondiplomatic personnel must pay a small fee for car and driving licenses. (For further information on resale of imported vehicles, see TRANSPORTATION.)

No restrictions are placed on the sale of personal property brought to post for personal use. However, the resale value of most property generally is so low that most employees export all effects. However, nearly everyone sells their car(s) here because shipping a car from Kuwait is an extremely time-consuming process. General cargo exports are small and most shipowners prefer to transit the Suez Canal westward without cargo so as to avoid high canal usage fees. What exports there are, are usually held until a ship can be completely filled (sometimes months) so that the canal-usage fees become economical.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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LOCAL HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day	January 1
*Birth of the Prophet	January 30
Kuwait National Day	February 25
*Ascension Day	June 11
*Eid Al-Fitr	August 11, 12, 13
*Waqfa	October 18
*Eid Al-Adha	October 19, 20, 21
*Islamic New Year	November 9

*Approximate dates for 1980 since these religious holidays are based on the lunar month. These dates also advance about 10 days each year.

